

## Questions and Answers: Watershed Round Table Request for Proposals

December 9, 2013

Q: BMP Installation is not a typical activity for certain Roundtables and not consistent with our plans for 2014. What are DEQ's recommendations for meeting the RFP request for 50% of award to be "Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention and Restoration Projects with information for BMP installation to calculate pollution reductions"?

A: While DEQ is striving for better collection of BMP data and EPA is requiring proportionally more funding toward BMP installation, DEQ will continue to support an array of methodologies to address water quality and watershed improvement.

- One approach would be for applicants to partner with groups (e.g. county extension, nature centers, etc.) who are more accustomed to implementing BMPs. For example, partnering with soil and water conservation districts on farm tours and field days geared towards local agricultural landowners or suburban residents is an excellent way to reach target audiences and fulfill pollution prevention and restoration deliverable goals.
- DEQ also continues to support forum-based approaches that engage stakeholders in achieving water quality. For river basins where actual BMP installation will not be the most effective means to meeting watershed improvement goals, workshops and forums targeted at key stakeholder groups may be counted as Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention and Restoration provided baseline data and feedback surveys are used to characterize and report increased awareness or behavior changes (e.g. change in local ordinance, new policy initiative, or change in fertilizer use). Educational topics that could pertain to Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention and Restoration may include, but are not limited to, water quality planning topics, policy topics that address local water quality or Chesapeake Bay issues, BMPs, stormwater program rollout and implementation, local TMDL issues, addressing the diversity of the watershed (e.g. aspects about urban vs. non-urban streams or karst vs. non-karst watersheds), or how programs and ordinances can be established so appropriate BMPs can be put in the ground. The emphasis of the work should be on activities that advance the specific water quality improvement needs of the basin and there should be an intentional connection of how activities would help meet statewide nonpoint source reduction goals and/or Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan goals.

*When holding workshops and forums to fulfill pollution prevention and restoration goals, efforts should be made to bring key players (local landowners, elected officials) to the table beyond regular roundtable members and participants.*

In addition, Roundtables whose current administrative costs exceed the \$7500.00 limit and who cannot reduce the costs, should articulate the need for a higher proportion of administrative funds in the application. Please articulate the justification for the request. DEQ will consider waiving the cap on \$7,500.00 for non-BMP activity.

Q: In the application, under Section 5 - **Key Activities and Initiatives**, can a series of workshops/annual meetings be lumped under one activity?

A: Yes.

Q: Should maintenance and administration of the webpage be identified as an individual activity?

A: It should be identified as an individual activity to ensure appropriate accounting.

Q: Should financial and administrative support be lumped as an activity?

A: That would be fine.

*When developing the separate activities listed on the application consider how you will be reporting activities. If they can be lumped, due to common timing, learning concepts or funding approach it may be more effective to lump. For example, lumping each quarterly meeting into one activity may streamline the application and subsequent reporting.*

Q: Should every item included in the **Budget Narrative** have an “activity” identified?

A: Personnel and fringe could be lumped in the activity section for related planning and administrative tasks (e.g. personnel costs associated with grant administration, meeting planning including quarterly board meetings and an annual event). In addition, supplies for quarterly meetings could be lumped as could travel for related tasks. However, an effort should be made to break out costs by activities as defined in Section 5. For example, supplies or other direct costs such as a facility rental fee associated with planning an annual meeting or other event should be listed individually.

Q: In Section 9 - **Budget Narrative**, in the column titled, “Activity Type from Section 5” do we need to crosswalk the personnel associated with each “Activity or Event” presented in Section 5?

A: Yes. However, lumping activities in Section 5, **Key Activities and Initiatives** (as described in the previous question and answer), will streamline the crosswalk in the **Budget Narrative** (e.g. lump quarterly board meetings as one activity).

Q: Reporting requirements were not presented in the RFP, how will they differ from the past?

A: Generally, watershed groups currently provide a Project Financial Report Form (aka Attachment B) and a financial narrative, a narrative component addressing activities and accomplishments, and a milestone table (aka Attachment C) for each quarterly report. DEQ anticipates use of the same reporting scheme and forms (e.g. Attachment B, Attachment C) as employed in the past for Roundtables. There is still a federal requirement to provide employee time accounting and certification for all staff funded by federal funds. The requirements differ for staff 100% funded by a single federal grant and positions funded by multiple sources. The reimbursement request should specifically present the hours and percent effort associated with any staff time billed to the grant. The [DCR Grant Management Manual](#) that outlines these requirements is still relevant and the forms described in that manual should be used for these DEQ contracts. Electronic copies of these forms can be obtained from your DEQ Regional Office contact.

Q: How will Roundtables be expected to participate in the February Milestone and Nonpoint Source Plan meeting? What is the expectation of representation/participation by the roundtable?

- 1) Will there be one meeting or several meetings?
- 2) Will this be available by webinar accessible anywhere or only at regional offices?
- 3) Will there be an expectation to review any plans/documents and if so, what is the time commitment?
- 4) Interested in knowing level of involvement to budget appropriately.

A: The expectation is to have at least one representative from each Roundtable, and that member will report back to the larger group. The expectation is that Roundtables can provide insight into the water quality improvement needs in each basin and help identify how local needs overlap with 1) statewide nonpoint source reduction goals and/or 2) Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan goals.

- 1) A subsequent meeting is likely.
- 2) The meeting will be conducted in DEQ's office in Glen Allen and will be broadcast via webinar to other DEQ regional offices.
- 3) Review of plans/documents is encouraged and should take a half day.
- 4) Roundtables can plan to attend a second meeting in the budget; however, attendance at any additional meetings is not a requirement in the RFP.

Q: What is expected in the "Role of Partner" field in Section 5?

A: Section 5 has an error in the application. "Role of Partner" should be exchanged for Start/End dates. There is an expectation that key dates will be provided for each activity. Ultimately DEQ will develop a milestone table that details the key initiatives, activities and sub-activities.

Q: Under eligible applicants, our organization, who has received Watershed Roundtable funding for the last several years, is not included. Are river basin commissions and other public entities excluded from applying?

A: The intent of the RFP was to include organizations that have received funding in the past, in addition to similar organizations who have not received funding to date. River Basin Commissions are an eligible entity. If there is question on whether or not an organization meets the "eligibility" criteria please contact [Liz McKercher](#) or [Nicole Sandberg](#) to discuss.